

BRUSSELS**Euros Coming**

It is understood that the Executive Commission of the Common Market has made achievement of a common currency its next major strategic objective. The last-minute agreement by Germany in December to include farm products in the customs union and to accept a common grains price beginning July 1, 1967 means that on or shortly after that date the final 30% of internal duties will be dropped and the common external tariff

Abroad

established. The single-market situation then existing would almost compel adoption of a common currency, even without prior decision. And a common currency will, in turn, lead into common fiscal and budgetary policies. In spite of its apparent conflict with his political nationalism, de Gaulle seems to accept the idea of the common currency, chiefly because he feels it would enable the Euro (or whatever it is to be called) to be the peer of the dollar, and the idea of full economic union because he thinks politics need not be determined by economics.

ROME**New Front**

The election of Giuseppe Saragat as Italian President, after weeks of parliamentary stalemate à la Albany, was made possible by a deal involving the Communists, Nenni's left-wing socialists, Saragat's own right-wing socialists and the left (Fanfani) wing of the Christian Democrats. Projecting the political logic of this coalition, a Communist leader, Giorgio Amendola—apparently with the approval of Luigi Longo, Togliatti's successor as Party Secretary, but against the sharp criticism of the "Chinese wing"—has proposed formation of a unified "Italian Labor Party" including all Communists, socialists and "social democrats."

BANGKOK**As the Wind Blows**

As the Communists move into the final phase of their campaigns in Laos and South Vietnam, they begin to set the stage for the takeover of Thailand. The Northeast is Thailand's most vulnerable area: its population is ethnically distinct from the Thais, illiterate and poor; and it shares an 850-mile border with Laos, from which Pathet Lao and Chinese Communist infiltrators enter without difficulty. The "Voice of Free Thailand" underground radio has stepped up operations, and in late December proclaimed formation of the standard National Liberation Front. Neutralist opinion has been finding expression, following a slackening in control by the military regime of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn. The Siamese have maintained their independence over the centuries by guile rather than force, by yielding to the prevailing wind rather than beating against it. They

swung easily with the battle reports into and out of alliance with Japan in the Second World War. With American power still in the neighborhood, the government will doubtless hold as is; but if the Americans pull out, Bangkok won't wait to be raped.

LONDON**Plant Life**

The following letter was addressed to the editor of the English magazine, *Amateur Gardener*: "I wonder if you could offer me some advice as to the type of plants which survive a hot, dry, dark atmosphere. Perhaps I should explain. I work in a large basement office which has no window and consequently no natural daylight. I have to depend on a five foot strip light which remains alight from only 9 AM until 5:30 PM each day. There are no external ventilators and the only means of obtaining any fresh air is either to leave the door open, or (for myself) to go and stand in the road for a while. If I leave the door open there is an excessive draught and therefore I must keep the fan-heater on all day, every day. I have had no success as yet in keeping and enjoying any form of plant life at all."



Jon, Daily Mail

Ben Roth Agency

"Their habits have ruined the street."

PARIS**Shades of Blum-Thorez**

For the first time since the united front of the thirties, a formal electoral pact on a departmental scale has been signed by the Socialist and Communist Parties. In the Department of the Seine (Paris and environs, with 13% of the French electorate), the two parties will enter a single list in the municipal elections that will take place March 14. Several minor parties of the Left are expected to sign up. The Communists are jubilant, and, looking toward the Presidential election scheduled for December 5, are pressing for extension of the front on a national scale.

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